

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of)	
)	
VONAGE HOLDINGS CORPORATION)	WC Docket No. 03-211
Petition for Declaratory Ruling)	
)	

**COMMENTS OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC-SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICIALS-
INTERNATIONAL, INC.**

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International, Inc. (“APCO”) hereby submits the following brief comments in response to the Commission’s *Public Notice*, DA 03-2952, released September 26, 2003, in WC Docket 03-211, seeking comments regarding a Petition for Declaratory Ruling filed on September 22, 2003, by Vonage Holdings Corporation (“Vonage”).

APCO is the nation’s oldest and largest public safety communications organization. Founded in 1935, APCO has over 16,000 individual members, most of whom are state or local government employees who manage and operate communications systems for police, fire, emergency medical and other public safety agencies. APCO has been at the forefront of efforts to improve 9-1-1 service and promote the nationwide deployment of “Enhanced 9-1-1” for all telephone communications.

The Vonage Petition raises a fundamental question regarding the regulatory treatment of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone service. APCO's interest in this matter flows from its concern that VoIP, if not properly regulated, could seriously undermine 9-1-1 service as VoIP grows and becomes a common source of voice communication.

Today, the public enjoys highly reliable access to "Enhanced 9-1-1" service over the vast majority of wireline telephones. Their calls are routed automatically to the correct Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), along with Automatic Location Information (ALI) and Automatic Number Identification (ANI). This E9-1-1 service greatly improves the speed and accuracy of emergency call-taking and deployment of emergency personnel.

In recent years, the FCC has recognized the vital role of E911, and has adopted comprehensive rules to ensure that wireless telephone service also provides E911 capability. Our concern is that VoIP is today where wireless was 5-10 years ago, a nascent service on the verge of becoming a major vehicle for telephone communication and 9-1-1 calls.

APCO has adopted the attached resolution regarding VoIP. Consistent with that resolution, we urge the Commission to take all necessary steps to ensure that all 9-1-1 calls, whether over traditional wireline, wireless, or VoIP, provide E9-1-1 capability in an

effective and efficient manner.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

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October 27, 2003

Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, Inc.

**Resolution
Voice Over The Internet Telephone Services**

Whereas, Voice over Internet telephone services is a telecommunications methodology that utilizes the internet to transmit live switched voice telephone calls over the internet using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) (commonly referred to as Voice on the Net or VON) versus sending them over conventional commercial telephone circuits/long distance networks and switching systems; and

Whereas, When the VON system is utilized, analog voice signals from the telephone are converted to digitally modulated "packets" and transmitted in digital format just as computer data or digital video signals would be via the internet to an IP (Internet Protocol) address where the call could be converted to analog and completed over the Public Switched Telephone Network or could be directly connected to another VoIP telephone; and

Whereas, Although this technology is still emerging and developing, it is growing in popularity; and

Whereas, Telephone service utilizing the Voice over the Internet has serious implications for enhanced 9-1-1 systems;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That APCO strongly encourage all providers of VON telephone services take action to ensure that when an emergency 9-1-1 call is placed from a telephone using VON, the call is completed to the appropriate Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) and the physical address of the caller's location is displayed via the Automatic Location Identification (ALI) database; and be it further resolved

That APCO recognizes the authority of state and local government to assess 9-1-1 fees, where authorized by valid statutes, against VON subscribers and the responsibility of VON providers to collect and submit the 9-1-1 fees; and be it further resolved

That APCO recognizes the authority of the PSAP to determine 9-1-1 call routing, including routing of 9-1-1 calls placed utilizing VON technology, based upon its jurisdictional requirements and policies; and be it finally resolved

That APCO does not support routing 9-1-1 calls, including those placed utilizing VON, to an agency's ten-digit administrative lines, except as necessary in a short term interim solution, with the agreement of the PSAP.